

## ***CITY OF PLEASANT HILL***

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Pleasant Hill, CA 94523

### **SIGNS**

#### Applicant Guide

#### **WHAT APPROVALS DO I NEED FOR A SIGN?**

You need the approval of the Architectural Review Commission (ARC) and you need a Building Permit. If the sign is for a store front within a shopping center, you should check to see if the center has a sign program to which you must conform.

#### **WHAT ARE THE STEPS?**

**Step 1** Preliminary Review - Prior to submittal of a formal application, it is recommended that the applicant discuss the preliminary proposal with Community Development Department staff. The staff can, if requested, respond back in writing regarding the project conformity with the Zoning Ordinance, applicable site planning, building design, landscaping, and other criteria, and application fee requirements. It is also important to determine if a sign program exists for your development and what are the criteria and standards.

**Step 2** Filing the Application - Application for a Sign should be made to the Community Development Department on its Application for Development Review form. The application form must be accompanied by the supporting materials specified by the Agency, including plans, drawings, and other project description information necessary to permit adequate review of the proposed action. A filing fee will be required for each Sign application in an amount set from time to time by the City Council.

A Community Development staff member will be assigned to review the application materials for completeness and to prepare a staff report to the Architectural Review Commission. After submitting the application in the manner described below, the application will be reviewed for completeness within 30 days. If the application is complete, the applicant will be notified of a hearing date. If the application is incomplete, the applicant will be notified of the necessary

additional information required for a complete submittal. Public hearings will be scheduled not earlier than two weeks after the application is deemed complete. Additional information may be required as staff review of the project progresses.

**Step 3** Environmental Review - Almost all Sign Permit applications will not need to go through a complex Environmental Review Process. This is because when most signs are being proposed they are for placement upon existing structures, and the City has found them to be exempt from the Environmental Review process. When a sign is being proposed for a new project, its environmental effect will be assessed as part of the project's review.

**Step 4** Architectural Review Commission - A study session is recommended for sign programs or major deviations from approved sign program. At this meeting Staff will make an informal review of the proposal which will be followed by the applicant's presentation. The Commission will then give the applicant some general directions and suggestions to consider in preparing the application for formal Commission review.

The applicant shall submit 6 copies of drawings to Staff no less than 7 days prior to the scheduled study session.

Following the study sessions, if any, staff will prepare a staff report to the Architectural Review Commission which includes: (1) a description of the proposal; (2) a summary of its relationship to relevant Sign Ordinance provisions, as well as its design considerations and (3) related staff recommendations with respect to project approval. A copy of this report will be sent to the applicant during the week preceding the Architectural Review Commission hearing. Copies will also be available for public review at the Community Development Department.

At the meeting, Staff will make its report and recommendation which will be followed by the applicant's presentation. The Commission will then make a decision based on the Staff recommendation, the testimony of the applicant and other interested persons, environmental information, previous comments of the Commission, if any, and any other pertinent information. After review of the plans, the Commission may: (1) approve or conditionally approve the sign as submitted; (2) postpone action pending receipt of additional information or amended plans; (3) deny the application. A copy of the Commission's decision and findings will be mailed to the applicant within ten days.

If a hearing on an application is continued for the submission of revised plans or additional information, the revised drawings or additional information must be

submitted to the Community Development Director a minimum of 10 calendar days before the next Public Hearing.

**Step 5** Building Permit Issuance - After 10 days have elapsed from ARC approval of the sign (i.e., no appeal), and all application approval requirements and related ordinances have been complied with, the City Building Inspector may issue a Building Permit if one is required. The Building Inspector will then work to ensure that the project is completed in compliance with all permits, approved plans and related conditions.

### **WHAT MUST BE SUBMITTED?**

All submittal information required in the Architectural Submittal Requirements Checklist shall be presented including the Application for Development Review form, related fees to the Community Development Department before the application can be accepted as complete.

### **MAY A DECISION BE APPEALED?**

You or anyone else who is dissatisfied with the decision of the Architectural Review Commission may appeal that decision to the City Council. To appeal, a written statement and filing fee must be filed with the Agency within 10 days after the decision is made at a public meeting. A public hearing will then be set before the City Council to consider the appeal.

If no appeal to a decision is filed within 10 days, the decision will be considered final.

### **WHEN DOES THE ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW COMMISSION MEET?**

The Architectural Review Commission holds Public Hearings on the first and third Thursdays of every month. These meetings commence at 5 p.m. and are held at City Hall.

### **HOW LONG WILL IT TAKE TO OBTAIN ARC APPROVAL?**

Normally about four weeks. This period will be longer if the decision is appealed to the City Council.